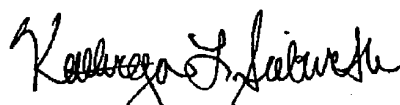


Appln. No. 10/692,544
Filing Date: October 24, 2003

REMARKS

In response to the Notice Regarding Benefit/Priority Claim(s), Applicants submit herewith an amended claim to priority for the subject application. The information for an intervening continuation application was inadvertently omitted in the Preliminary Amendment filed 24 October, 2003. This priority claim has also been updated to recite the patent number for the predecessor application.

Respectfully submitted,



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APPLICATION NUMBER	FILING OR PRIORITY DATE	FIRST NAMED APPLICANT	ATTY. DOCKET NO./TITLE
10/692,544	10/24/2003	Michael John Sasse	P31938C2

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CONFIRMATION NO. 1157



OC000000011879866

Date Mailed: 02/11/2004

Notice Regarding Benefit/Priority Claim(s)

☐ **Improper Benefit Claim(s) to Prior-Filed Nonprovisional Application(s)**

The benefit claim(s) to prior-filed nonprovisional application(s) is improper because there is no specific reference for each prior-filed application that includes: (1) the identification of the prior-filed application by application number, or international application number and international filing date; and (2) a clear indication the relationship (i.e., continuation, divisional, or continuation-in-part) of the nonprovisional applications. For example, applicant should amend the specification to include a specific reference, such as "This application is a continuation of Application No. 10/---,--- filed ---," in the first sentence of the specification following the title.

Applicant should review each benefit claim submitted and, if appropriate, provide the proper reference to the prior-filed application(s) as required by 37 CFR 1.78. A proper relationship includes an identification of each nonprovisional application as a continuation, divisional or continuation-in-part application of the immediate prior-filed nonprovisional application for which a benefit is claimed under 37 CFR 1.78 in order to establish copendency throughout the entire chain of prior-filed applications. The specific reference must be included in the domestic priority information section of an application data sheet (37 CFR 1.76), or the specification must contain, or be amended to contain, such reference in the first sentence following the title.

Timeliness: The required reference for each benefit claim must be filed during the pendency of the instant application and within the later of: (1) four months from the actual filing date of the instant application, or the national stage commencement date if the instant application is a national stage application under 35 U.S.C. 371; or (2) sixteen months from the filing date of the prior-filed application. Failure to timely file the required reference is considered a waiver of any benefit claim, unless a grantable petition to accept an unintentionally delayed claim under 37 CFR 1.78(a), the surcharge set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(t), and the required reference are filed. See 37 CFR 1.78(a).

☐ **Improper Benefit Claim(s) to Prior-Filed Nonprovisional Application(s)**

The benefit claim(s) to prior-filed provisional application(s) is improper because the instant application was not filed within twelve (12) months from the filing date of the provisional application, and there is no indication of an intermediate nonprovisional application that is directly claiming the

benefit of the provisional application and filed within 12 months of the filing date of the provisional application. For example, applicant should amend the specification to include a specific reference, such as "This application is a continuation of Application No. 10/---,--- filed ---, which claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/---,--- filed---." in the first sentence of the specification following the title.

Applicant should review each benefit claim submitted and, if appropriate, provide the proper reference to the prior-filed applications (including an indication of any intermediate nonprovisional application that is directly claiming the benefit of the provisional application and filed with 12 months of the filing date of the provisional application) as required by 37 CFR 1.78. The required reference must be included in the domestic priority information section of an application data sheet (37 CFR 1.76), or the specification must contain, or be amended to contain, such reference in the first sentence following the title.

Timeliness: The required reference for each benefit claim must be filed during the pendency of the instant application and within the later of: (1) four months from the actual filing date of the instant application, or the national stage commencement date if the instant application is a national stage application under 35 U.S.C. 371; or (2) sixteen months from the filing date of the prior-filed application. Failure to timely file the required reference is considered a waiver of any benefit claim, unless a grantable petition to accept an unintentionally delayed claim under 37 CFR 1.78(a), the surcharge set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(t), and the required reference are filed during the pendency of the instant application.

☐ **Improper Priority Claim(s) to Prior-Filed Foreign Application(s)**

The instant application was not filed within twelve (12) months from the filing date of the prior-filed foreign application, and there is no benefit claim to an intermediate nonprovisional application filed within 12 months of the filing date of the foreign application. Applicant should review each priority claim submitted and, if appropriate, provide the proper reference to any intermediate nonprovisional application filed within 12 months of the filing date of the foreign application in compliance with 37 CFR 1.78, or delete the priority claim. The required reference to an intermediate nonprovisional application must be included in the domestic priority information section of an application data sheet (37 CFR 1.76), or the specification must contain, or be amended to contain, such reference in the first sentence following the title.

Timeliness: The required reference for the benefit claim to an intermediate nonprovisional application must be filed during the pendency of the instant application and within the later of: (1) four months from the actual filing date of the instant application, or the national stage commencement date if the instant application is a national stage application under 35 U.S.C. 371; or (2) sixteen months from the filing date of the prior-filed application. Failure to timely file the required reference is considered a waiver of any benefit claim, unless a grantable petition to accept an unintentionally delayed claim under 37 CFR 1.78(a), the surcharge set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(t), and the required reference are filed.

☐ **Benefit Claims to More Than 400 Prior-Filed Applications**

The Office's automated system to record and capture benefit claims is only capable of recording benefit claims for 400 prior-filed applications. Therefore, the Office is unable to generate a filing receipt containing benefit claims for more than 400 prior-filed applications even though applicant is entitled to submit benefit claims for more than 400 prior-filed applications. Accordingly, applicant should not request a corrected filing receipt to include benefit claims for more than 400 prior-filed applications.



Prior-Filed Nonprovisional Application has been Improperly Indicated as a National Stage (35 U.S.C. 371) Application

Applicant submitted a benefit claim to a prior-filed nonprovisional application and improperly indicated that the prior-filed application is a national stage application under 35 U.S.C. 371. The Office's records show that the prior-filed application is an application filed under 35 U.S.C. 111(a). The Office has entered the benefit claim to the prior-filed application as a benefit claim to an application filed under 35 U.S.C. 111(a). Any request for a corrected filing receipt to include the indication that the prior-filed application is a national stage application will not be granted unless applicant supplies evidence that the prior application was in fact a national stage application. Accordingly, applicant should not submit such request without such evidence. Applicant should submit an amendment (or an application data sheet (ADS) if the benefit claim was submitted in an ADS) to delete the indication that the prior-filed application is a national stage application.

For more information and examples on benefit claims, please see Claiming the Benefit of a Prior-Filed Application under 35 U.S.C. 119(e), 120, 121, and 365(c), 1268 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office 89 (March 18, 2003), which is available on the USPTO website at <http://www.uspto.gov/web/offices/com/sol/og/2003/week11/pathbene.htm>, and the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (MPEP) §§ 201.11 and 201.14.

PART 2 - COPY TO BE RETURNED WITH RESPONSE